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ABSTRACT

Guidelines are offered for preparing and publishing textbook materials in Portuguese and other uncommonly taught languages. The available options for publishing Portuguese materials include two textbook publishers, three university presses, self-publication, and the Cabrilho Press, which produces language textbooks. Methods for submitting manuscripts to publishers and for self-publication are summarized. For self-publication, a neat typescript is recommended. Obtaining permission for including copyrighted materials, soliciting reviews by colleagues, researching printing and binding costs, preparing a copyright notice, and marketing are described. Journals that should receive review copies are listed along with other publishing handbooks and resources. (RW)

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DEVELOPING TEXTBOOK MATERIALS IN UNCOMMON LANGUAGES

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In reporting the present state of Portuguese textbook publishing to the Portuguese Language Development Group in 1980, I stated this: "It stinks!"[1] The situation seemed very dismal, and the only way out seemed to be self-publication; commercial publishers--even those who had championed the Portuguese cause (specifically the D. C. Heath of the 1940's)--were no longer receptive to proposals regarding Portuguese.

I expected the prospects would only get worse with the passage of time, but such has not been the case. In recent years a textbook publisher has surfaced who does not wince and begin to stutter when you mention Portuguese to him. This is Heinle & Heinle (51 Sleeper St., Boston, MA 02210, 617-451-1940) whose main concentration is foreign languages. Stan Galek, the Editor-in-Chief, has told me that they are interested in considering textbooks in Portuguese and other lesser-taught languages.

A second publisher has recently come to the forefront which is ideally set-up for short-run textbooks, and which has already published a number of titles in lesser-taught languages. This is the University Press of America (Box 19101, Washington, D.C. 20036, 301-459-3366, Louise A. Hohensee, editor). Their business arrangement is ideal for textbooks. When you sign a contract,

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[1] This paper was originally to describe the situation with publishing textbooks in the area of Portuguese. Much of what is said, however, can certainly be applied to any other lesser-taught language.

you agree that your college bookstore (or a consortium of bookstores) will purchase a total of 85 copies of the book, and that is your total financial responsibility. So if two or three of your colleagues elsewhere agree to try out your book, this responsibility is immediately liquidated. UPA pays a 5% royalty, which is very low, but, your book does get published, and it is refereed. They reproduce the author's typescript, and books come out (partly for that reason) in a hurry. I would recommend this as a good possibility to investigate.

There are also major university presses that are taking on textbooks, and three of them are publishing Portuguese textbooks. I refer to Georgetown University Press (Washington, D.C. 20057, Richard J. O'Brien, editor), Vanderbilt University Press (2205 West End Ave., Nashville, TN 37203, 615-322-3585, John W. Poindexter, director), and the University Presses of Florida (15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, FL 32603, Philip L. Martin, director). It is true that these three presses published books by authors from their own universities, and they may or may not be receptive to ideas from the outside. Still, it would be worth inquiring. Another possibility is to approach your own university press (if you have one), armed with Português Contemporâneo (Georgetown), Crônicas Brasileiras (UP Florida), and A Grammar of Spoken Brazilian Portuguese (Vanderbilt), and argue that these presses have published textbooks in Portuguese and have found it profitable. Your press might consider doing the same thing.

No matter whom you approach though, you should present a

prospectus which describes the book and its market. University presses are currently seeking creative ways to remain solvent, and this type of textbook might seem very attractive.

There is yet another possibility among publishers, and that is The Cabrilho Press. My colleague and collaborator, Eduardo M. Dias (UCLA) and I published our textbook Portugal: Língua e Cultura through the Cabrilho Cultural Center at UCLA in 1974. Two years later, the CCC turned the book over to us, not wishing to engage in a commercial venture, and our Press was born. We currently sell about 1500 copies a year of our Portugal: Língua e Cultura (along with a lab manual, lab tapes, and writing manual)--an astronomical figure for a version of the language that is considered to have very little sales potential. Still, 1500 copies per year is not attractive to a large publisher, who would like to sell 10,000 to 50,000 a year at the college level.

We have recently taken on a second-year Portuguese textbook, Larry King and Margarita Suñer's Para a Frente! which was initially published in a cautious run of 1000 copies in 1981. We envisioned that supply would last two to three years. Virtually immediately we had to rerun the book and printed 2000 copies. There is indeed a real market for textbooks in lesser-taught languages; it is far from gigantic, but it is consistent.

The mission of the Cabrilho Press is to serve the profession by producing needed short-run language textbooks. We are receptive to proposals for new books (The Cabrilho Press, 1056 So. Crescent Hts. Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90035).

Another possibility is self-publication. If all else fails,

or even if it does not, you may want to publish the book and distribute it yourself. There are a number of reasons why language instructors are extremely reticent to take on this type of project. How do I do it? Isn't it expensive? How will the Dean view it? How do I initiate the business? How do I publicize and market the book? These are all legitimate questions and represent what might appear to be major stumbling blocks. However, these problems are not as big as they seem, and all have fairly simple solutions.

To start out, I would recommend the University Press of America formula, which is to publish a neat typescript. Ideally your typescript will have to be reduced to fit nicely on a 6 x 9 inch page. (One formula is to single space, on an 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet, leave an inch and a half margin at the top and bottom, and keep your column of type 5 1/2 inches wide, then reduce the page to 82%. Wherever possible--between paragraphs, before and after examples--use double spaces to keep the page open.) Illustrations from magazines (shy away from photographs which will reproduce poorly in inexpensive printing processes) and other realia can be included, too. Ask your art supply store about a hand-held waxer, instead of using rubber cement. Proof-read carefully. Make several xerox copies and ask your friends and colleagues to proofread, too.

Mentioning illustrations brings to mind the matter of getting permissions. Copyright infringement is a federal crime, and you should obtain written permission to include any copyrighted material (drawings, readings, anything). How to go about getting

such permission is explained in A Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press), now called (in its 13th edition) The Chicago Manual of Style--look in the index under "Permission to reprint, asking." In requesting permissions, explain the nature of your book; it may easily be that you will get them free, especially to reproduce ads. You must acknowledge these permissions in the book.

While your manuscript is still in less-than-final form, it is important to have it reviewed by colleagues at other institutions, even by anonymous reviewers known to your colleagues, and to receive reports about your book. It will make a better book, because reviewers always think of things you will not have considered, and also, it will give the book credibility with the administration of your institution (especially, of course, if the reviewers consider it good and useful). You should take this matter of pre-publication reviews very seriously, because a self-published, unrefereed book will not be esteemed. You should acknowledge the people who do these reviews in the book.

Once you have a final manuscript, then what? By all means check your local printers for prices "to produce 500? 1000? copies of this manuscript in a 6 x 9 perfect bound book, printed on 60 pound paper, and with a 10 point coated cover, printed one side." (Perfect binding, is, of course, far from perfect--pages are cut on all four sides, then are glued together at the spine--but it will last at least a school year, and it is not expensive, as Smythe sewing would be.) In ordinary offset

printing, 500 costs about 75% of what 1000 costs. There is a printer in Detroit (National Reproductions, 433 E. Larned, Detroit, MI 48226, 313-961-5252), which is quite inexpensive for a run of 500, even considering freight to wherever you might be.

A very useful book for the would-be book producer is the Literary Market Place, called LMP, which is available at every library reference desk, neighborhood or university. This book lists, under "Book Manufacturers", hundreds of other people who can produce your book. This volume is a practical encyclopedia of virtually every book-making service there is. You should consult it.

Before your book is printed, you must prepare a copyright notice to appear in it. The Chicago Manual of Style will tell you what this should look like, and you can get forms by writing (or calling) the Register of Copyrights in Washington (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 20559. The phone is in Virginia: 703-557-8700, open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Once the book is out, send review copies immediately to journals which are likely to review textbooks, such as the Modern Language Journal, and in the case of Portuguese textbooks, Hispania, and perhaps the Luso-Brazilian Review. The MLA's Directory of Periodicals is well indexed and will give a number of good places to send review copies.

What about marketing the book? Ideally, of course, your book should be published in the winter so that you can publicize it in the Spring. Perhaps an Art colleague can help prepare a blurb, or an advertisement for a few journals. For mailing

labels targeted to the public you are interested in, we have used College Marketing Group, 6 Winchester Terrace, Winchester, MA 01890 (607-729-7865). Others are listed in the LMP under "Mailing Lists." (The MLA, which also has good mailing lists for the profession, is not listed in the LMP.) These services sell you labels, in zipcode order (which is required for bulk mailing, which you should investigate at your local post office), for the exact audience you pinpoint. When we were advertising for Para a Frente!, I used the College Marketing merged lists of Portuguese instructors and Spanish Department chairmen. Any combination is possible. Advertising pays.

It is important to be legal. Secure a license or selling permit, or whatever your state requires, and abide by whatever the arrangement is. The Internal Revenue Service is insistent that you strive to make a profit (however small), so it is important to cover all costs adequately. Your colleagues in the economics department can advise you about pricing, and your colleagues in marketing can also lend a hand.

Dozens of questions that you have now (or will have) can be answered by The Publish-It-Yourself Handbook, published by the Pushcart Press, Box 380, Wainscott, NY 11975 (516-324-9300). I would also cordially invite any interested person to call me (302-453-8699) and I will be pleased to answer any of your queries.